Hamilton, Rev. R. M

Sept. 1917, April 1918

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Hamilton, Rev. R. M

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September 20th, 1917

Rev. R. M. Hamilton,

Brockville, Ont.

My dear Mr. Hamilton:

In case I have overlooked the matter when I had interviewed your son I should advise him to make an application for such an appointment as we were speaking about through Lt.-Colonel W. P. Lang, Camp Borden, as he is keeping a list of all of our men and of possible appointments.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

Sept 1917, April 1918

April 15th, 1918

Rev. Mr. Hamilton,

Brockville, Ont.

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

I have just had a letter from President Rush Rhees which is strictly personal, but you are the only one who I think can deal with it at this stage. He writes me that your son has been a persona gratissima and won all hearts and at first got complete possession of his Battery of 190 students. Everything went well for the first few weeks, but they are convinced now that Captain Hamilton is suffering from shell shock. He is showing great lack of promptness in meeting engagements, maintains no records of students' attendance, and the men are losing confidence in his discipline. The general care of him and is not what it ought to be. He seems unable to concentrate for any length of time on any problem. Dr. Rhees says that these things are inexplicable in a man of such distinguished military experience and success, and he thinks that it might be wise for him to be recalled and given a new medical examination.

I have written President Rhees that I am laying the matter before you because it would seem to me that in view of these circumstances it would be only kindness to have him come home and have a thorough military examination. Probably at this time the strain of such work that he has been undergoing is too heavy for him.

I assure you that it is with the greatest possible

regret that I write to you in this way, and I am sure from what I know of President Rhees that he is acting out of the greatest kindness of heart. Indeed his letter to me shows that.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
BROCKVILLE, ONT, April 18th 1918

My Dear Sir Robert

I received your letter and at once wrote to both President Rush Rhees and to Frank. There is evidently something wrong, but who is to blame and what is the reason is not yet clear.

Three explanations occur to me. I. He is really suffering from shell shock and has been subjected to a temporary breakdown. But I am loath to believe that this is the case. In some respects it would be more comforting if it were. 2. Frank has been plunged into a job that was bigger than either he or, I venture to say you, expected he would be ask to undertake. He went over there knowing something about the work of an ordinary Subaltern; and in less than a week they dragged him before the public and have kept him there until he has delivered over one hundred addresses covering territory as far east as Syracuse and how far west I do not know, This has been in connection the awakening of interest in the war. The newspapers have given him very favorable notices. This has all been done between the middle of October, and the present moment, if I remember rightly as to the time of his appointment. What his duties have been at the College I do not know but it would be at that point it would be hardest to maintain the standard with which he set out. He had no background for the systematic delivery of lectures or studies on drill , trench warfare, etc. You can understand how easily it would be for a man to burn his ground over and leave himself impoverished for future efforts by the inexperience with which he tackled his work. I think he knows enough about the work , if he knew enough about the methods of teaching. I need not suggest to you that there is nothing so wrecks discipline as failure to keep you class moving forward with fresh interest in

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
BROCKVILLE, ONT.

their studies. Socially , the people of Rochester have given him the freedom of the city. He was made a member of all the leading clubs and his wife was treated with equal kindness by the ladies. He has had a continuous whirl of work and social excitement, not of the frivolous character, but yet enough to draw heavily on his resources. I fear Frank may have undertaken too many things and hence his failure to sustain a high standard. There is one thing I feel confident they cannot say, and that is, he has idled his time. He seems to have been on the rush all winter and lately we have heard from his wife that he was looking rather tired. 3. My third explanation is not very different from my second, except in this,- Frank is apt to scatter his interests too much, and if he has no controlling influence outside of himself would be apt to appear lacking in powers of concentration. I think Frank has succeeded in maintaining discipline very well when he ~~is~~ was a piece of the war machine, but I could conceive of his being too easy with the fellows for he is a ~~fella~~ boy of very kind and gentle disposition. He has been a first class sport and was always popular with his fellows, but not what you would call a leader. Keeping of class attendance he might have overlooked but was he asked to do so and after that has failed?

I do hope that this matter can be adjusted so that he may finish his term. As far as shell shock is concerned , it seems to me, that Rochester was suffering a good deal, from the way they have rushed him, but I know that it was done in pure kindness of heart and out of desire to help the boy along. It may have swung him off his feet somewhat. I would go over at once but I have been laid up with an attack of rheumatism that has settled in one of my knees and

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
BROCKVILLE, ONT.

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I am too lame to leave home.

You did not say that President Rush Rhees had said anything to Frank about the trouble. Perhaps if they got together and had a frank talk, things could be readjusted so as to enable him to continue to the end of his term, and then he could turn his attention to some other department of service. I have asked the President to do this and I hope he may be successful.

I thank you for the trouble you have taken in all this matter and I trust that things may be so adjusted that Frank will npt prove a disappointment to one who has placed so much kind confi dence in him.

I remain , My Dear Sir,

Yours very truly

D M Cameron

April 19th, 1918

Rev. R. W. Hamilton,

Brockville, Ont.

My dear Mr. Hamilton:

I have just received your letter and should not be at all surprised if the explanation of overwork is the real cause of your son's not measuring up recently to their local requirements. However, I am glad that you have written to President Rush Rhees and to Frank himself. If I hear anything further I will let you know.

Yours sincerely,

President.